

*REMARKS**Discussion of Claim Amendment*

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the mean saponification degree of all the polyvinylalcohols is between 80 and 92.9 mol-%. The claim amendment is supported by the specification on page 37, lines 20-22. No new matter has been added.

The Office Action

The Office Action sets forth the following grounds for rejection:

1. Claims 1 and 3-33 [sic. 1-33] are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly anticipated by Kondo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,830,874); and
2. Claims 1 and 3-33 [sic. 1-33] are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly unpatentable over Gries et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0186165 A1) in view of Kondo et al.

*Discussion of Rejections*1. Anticipation

Claims 1 and 3-33 are rejected as allegedly anticipated by Kondo et al. The Office Action states, in particular, that the protective layer of Kondo et al. comprises one or more types of polyvinylalcohol at the saponification degrees of 71% to 100% (less than 93 mol-%).

Applicants have amended claim 1, as discussed. Kondo et al. fails to disclose the presently claimed invention reciting that the mean saponification degree of all polyvinylalcohols used in the protective coating is between 80 and 92.9 mol-%. The nature of the disclosure in Kondo et al. is such that there is no adequate specificity to the disclosure pointing to the presently claimed range of 80 to 92.9%. Accordingly, the anticipation rejection should be removed. Claim 2 is not currently pending.

2. Obviousness

Claims 1 and 3-33 are rejected as allegedly unpatentable over Gries et al. in view of Kondo et al.

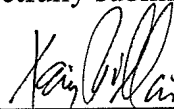
As discussed, claim 1 has been amended. The presently claimed invention is patentable over Gries et al. in view of Kondo et al. Applicants have chosen a range which provides improved properties, for example, the examples disclosed in the present specification clearly illustrate that when the average saponification degree is higher than 93 mol-% (examples 5-7), the pre-heat latitudes are inferior. In the examples of Kondo et al., the protective layer comprises one polyvinylalcohol with an average saponification degree of 98 mol-% (col. 39, lns. 1-2). Such a protective layer is used in the present invention as a comparative example (Table 3, example 7, page 47) and clearly lies outside the scope of the present invention. Moreover, Kondo et al. fails to teach that the mean saponification degree influences the properties of the printing plates, for example, the pre-heat latitude.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the presently claimed invention is patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion

A favorable decision is solicited. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



Xavier Pillai, Reg. No. 39,799
LEYDIG, VOIT & MAYER, LTD.
Two Prudential Plaza, Suite 4900
180 North Stetson Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6731
(312) 616-5600 (telephone)
(312) 616-5700 (facsimile)

Date: November 7, 2008